

GREENSBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, July 12, 2006 – 6:00 pm

Simkins Pavilion at Barber Park – 1500 Dan's Road

PRESENT: Marc Bush, Lori Galbreath, David Hoggard, Palmer Smith McIntyre, Rose Marie Ponton, Cheryl Wilson

ABSENT: Robert Douglas, III, Judi Rossabi, Randy Scott

STAFF PRESENT: Candice Bruton, Ed Deaton, Courtney Hemphill, John Hughes, Bonnie Kuester, Dan Maxson, Eddie Pugh, Marcie Richardson, Tom Shalley, Mike Simpson, Laurie Thore, Heather Ulrich, Bernadette White, Chris Wilson

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission was held at the Simkins Pavilion at Barber Park. David Hoggard, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the June 14, 2006 Commission Meeting were approved as submitted.

Recognition

Bonnie Kuester, Director, recognized the Parks and Recreation Employee of the Month for July, Eddie Pugh.

OLD BUSINESS

Trails Master Plan

Chuck Flink, Greenways, Inc., stated that the Trails Master Plan planning process began eighteen months ago. The consultant team began focusing on greenways and trails and then added bicycle and pedestrian planning.

Greenways, Inc. focused on the Greensboro urban area, which was most of Guilford County. The way the Greensboro Metropolitan Planning Organization is structured portions of the High Point area were not part of the study. Connections of the surrounding communities and surrounding counties were addressed in the study. Recognized during the planning process is that Greensboro is at a unique point in its history. Economic restructuring is taking place, along with significant growth and development, which are forces at work that will shape the future of this community.

Flink thanked the Moses Cone Wesley Long Community Health Foundation for funding, through Action Greensboro, the planning work to support health, wellness and greenway planning. This is the first time a community health foundation has underwritten the cost of doing major planning work of this type in the United States. The Greensboro Metropolitan Planning Organization has also supported the bicycle and pedestrian planning work.

The primary purposes of this plan are to:

- Define important connections between public health and the diminishing access to outdoor landscapes.
- Define how a community-wide bicycle, pedestrian and greenways plan can serve to improve the health and wellness of area residents.
- Define immediate and long-term goals for the bicycle, pedestrian, and greenway system.
- Propose and interconnect systems of greenways, on-road bicycle facilities and sidewalks. When linked together this will enhance transportation safety and broaden choices for getting to destinations by foot, bicycle, and public transportation.
- Form a web of outdoor facilities providing improved access to outdoor resources for transportation and recreation purposes.
- Use the development of integrated bicycle, pedestrian, and greenway facilities as a strategy to help the community achieve a range of community goals for land use, enhanced livability, and economic competitiveness.

Flink stated that the Greensboro Department of Transportation is exploring multi-modal transportation and is looking at strategies for the future. The plan explains these challenges and opportunity for the future.

Public meetings were held to gather public input. Public input was also gathered using an online survey and a statistical survey (conducted by UNCG Department of Public Health Education). Technical analysis was conducted by looking at technical issues that effect the development of an interconnected system of bicycle and pedestrian, on road and off road.

An entire chapter of this plan identifies programming. Greenways, Inc. has worked with the Guilford Health Partnership, Greensboro Department of Transportation (GDOT), and the Parks and Recreation Department regarding the realistic types of programming opportunities for the bicycle, pedestrian, and greenway network.

More than thirty-five different sources of funding have been identified. Greenways, Inc. has created strategic ways in which this community can take funds and leverage local funds to create more buying power to get these programs in place. A series of early action projects has been created.

The plan also addresses maintenance and operation. As this system continues to grow and expand for Parks and Recreation and GDOT, the non-profit and private sector will have increasingly important roles to play in how the system is maintained and operated.

Greenways, Inc. believes this plan will make the Greensboro urban area the leader in bicycle, pedestrian and greenway development in the state of North Carolina by adding approximately eight hundred fifty miles to the current system of one hundred twenty-five miles to the bicycle network, adding approximately three hundred sixty-two miles to the current system of three hundred seventy miles of pedestrian network, and adding approximately four hundred miles to the current system of eight-one miles of the greenway network. This will continue to put Greensboro in that leadership position and will provide a blue print in how to service the needs of the public as Greensboro continues to grow and develop.

Flink requested that the Parks and Recreation Commission support the guidance and recommendations that are addressed in this plan and for the Commission to recommend that City Council adopt the plan.

Rose Marie Ponton, Commissioner, asked if there has ever been a suggestion of holding a health fair on greenways having health agencies located along the greenways.

Flink replied stating that as the system continues to mature this would be a great feedback tool to develop.

Mike Simpson, Supervisor, Lakes and Trails, stated that the health and wellness element was incorporated in with the National Trails Day Celebrations by partnering with community health organizations. This type of health awareness will be incorporated more in the future.

Marc Bush, Commissioner, stated that due to current gas prices, Cycles de Oro business for bicycles sales have been phenomenal.

Palmer Smith McIntyre inquired as to when this will be presented to City Council.

Flink replied stating that a date has not been determined at this time. Currently, Greenways, Inc. is in the process of trying to merge Parks and Recreation needs and GDOT's transportation issues and is coordinating with GDOT so that all information can be presented in one package.

Action Taken

A motion was made by Lori Galbreath, and seconded by Marc Bush to support and proceed with the Trails Master Plan. A vote in favor was unanimous.

Jaycee Park Athletic Field Naming Request

Tom Shalley, Assistant Athletic Director, returned to the Commission seeking their approval for naming the Jaycee Park Athletic Fields after three long-term coaches, Brantley Edwards, Jerry Stanley and Henry Bondurant. Shalley stated that, as according to the Parks and Recreation Naming of Facilities Policy, a notice has been posted at the facility for thirty days stating the proposal for naming the fields.

Action Taken

A motion was made by Marc Bush and seconded by Rose Marie Ponton to approve the naming of Jaycee Park fields. A vote in favor was unanimous.

2006-07 Budget Update

Dan Maxson, Division Manager, stated to the Commission that during the last Parks and Recreation Commission meeting he presented the entire list of proposed reductions that were submitted to City Council. The items on the list that were removed from the Parks and Recreation Department budget for 2006-07 is a full-time park maintenance office position. The employee in this position has been relocated to another department. This is a position Parks and Recreation felt could be eliminated due to the creation of Field Operations Department and the changing of staffing and work demands. Also eliminated is the Tannenbaum Park Assistant Supervisor position. The occupant of this position has been relocated to serve as the Country Park Assistant Manager.

Maxson continued stating that there were many discussions regarding the proposed hockey position at the Sportsplex. City Council received numerous emails and comments from citizens who supported that Parks and Recreation maintain the full-time position. This position was on the list submitted to City Council because, although the department saw the importance of in-line hockey, this was a declining program. Through April of this year this program received a revenue decrease of thirty-nine percent. Fortunately for the department and citizens, City Council decided not to eliminate this position. As a result, Parks and Recreation had to make reductions elsewhere. The Sportsplex marketing budget was cut rather significantly and a part-time Sportsplex position was eliminated to make up the approximately fifty thousand dollar (\$50,000) difference. The Sportsplex manager and staff are confident they will be able to absorb these losses and continue programs and activities at the Sportsplex.

City Council also decided to cut approximately one hundred twenty-four thousand dollars (\$124,000) from the Organizational Development and Communications Department (ODC). ODC runs Channel 13 and prints all printed materials for city-wide communications. This reduction included one full-time position in their operation. The remaining balance of that total came from their printing budget. The City Manager committed to City Council that the difference ODC is losing in their printing budget will be made up from a number of departments who have printing, marketing and promotion budgets. All departments that have marketing dollar resources, such as Parks and Recreation, will have funds reallocated to ODC so the city can continue city-wide printed communication material publications to the public. A committee is being formed and a study will be conducted on what individual departments are doing in terms of communications with the citizens. As a result of this study, a determination will be made on how much our organization will give to ODC to support community city-wide printed communications. The impact is unknown at this time, but Parks and Recreation will do their best to manage that process and still get the word out in different ways to our citizens to make sure they are aware of our programs and when they occur.

Rose Marie Ponton inquired about as to what extent the public can register for programs on-line.

Maxson replied stating that Chris Wilson and Ed Deaton are researching on-line registration and are working with the Management Information System Department.

Ed Deaton stated that funding for on-line registration has been the concern; however progress is being made. Currently, some extent of on-line registration is being conducted in-house. For an example Deaton suggested visiting the Bur-Mil Park website.

Planning Update

Candice Bruton, Strategic Planning Administrator, updated the Commission on the following projects:

Barber Park Phase I

- Construction drawings complete and are in the office of the technical review committee
- Construction bidding process should be complete by the end of August 2006
- Present to City Council mid-September 2006
- Pre-construction meeting to be held end of October 2006
- Construction to begin in November 2006
- Park to re-open late summer or early fall 2007

Keeley Park Project

- Consultants are working on site analysis
- The first of two public meetings is scheduled for August 9, 2006 at 6:00 (during the August Commission meeting) at Peeler Recreation Center
- Several dams are located on the property. A big part of the work to date has been for dam specialists to investigate the condition of the dams and what would be needed to keep the lakes. The initial report shows that the dams are in good shape
- Communicating with North Carolina's Department of Transportation regarding the Urban Loop project

Leonard Recreation Center

- Part of the 2000 bond referendum
- Restrooms and concessions facility located behind the center consisting of nine hundred square feet
- Plumbing has been roughed in
- Concrete to be poured soon if not already
- Project complete by fall 2006

Peeler Recreation Center

- Restroom and shelter facility complete

Southwest Recreation Center

- Part of the 2000 bond referendum
- Architect consultants have been hired, site analysis in progress
- First public meeting will be held at Unitarian Universalist Church of Greensboro on July 19, 2006 at 6:00 pm.
- The surrounding community has been notified of this project and mailings were sent informing those of the public meeting.
- Construction bids in the end of August 2006
- Construction to begin November 2006
- The connection of greenways and trails planned in this area will still take place

NEW BUSINESS

Citizen Board Member Conference

Bernadette White, Project Coordinator, invited the Commission to attend the 27th Annual Citizen Board Member State Forum that will be held at the Airport Marriot Hotel from August 3-5, 2006.

Kuester commended White on her efforts in planning this forum and encouraged all Commissioners to attend.

Rose Marie encouraged Commissioners to attend as we are the host of this event and the forum offers opportunity and learning experience about the parks and recreation field.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

-NONE-

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Kuester stated that the change of locations for commission meetings offers the opportunity for Commissioners and for citizens to come forward with more flexibility with interchanges. This has worked very successfully in the past.

Many Parks and Recreation staff will be away during the October Commission meeting; therefore may want to consider rescheduling this meeting if indeed a meeting needs to take place.

A revised schedule of Commission meetings for the remainder of 2006 will be distributed soon.

Kuester invited all to attend the Bayou Bash that will be held at the Gardens this Saturday, July 15, 2006 and the Gang Prevention event that will be held at Guilford Technical Community College on August 10, 2006 from 9:00 – 12:00 noon.

Kuester stated that while attending a presentation at the Greensboro Coliseum, given by Lawrence Council, Public Administrator, who travels nationally and internationally, Council commented on the beauty of Greensboro and commended the Parks and Recreation Department.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Cheryl Wilson stated that she continuously informs her co-workers of Parks and Recreation events. Wilson stated that she spoke with John Hughes regarding concerns about the Warnersville Recreation Center playground. Wilson thanked whoever corrected the concerns and that she has received no more complaints. Wilson inquired about the proposed War Memorial Stadium bond referendum.

Maxson replied stating that the bond referendum for War Memorial Stadium is set at five million five hundred thousand dollars (5,500,000). The remainder of the ten million five hundred thousand dollar (\$10,500,000) bond referendum consists of Brightwood Neighborhood park development, Southwest Recreation Center, mini-park development, skateboard park, Music Garden property, land acquisitions, Sportsplex restrooms, and trails.

Marc Bush extended recognition to the employee of the month, Eddie Pugh. Bush stated that with the infrastructure, facilities, sports, gardens, and trails Greensboro is already a leader.

Palmer Smith McIntyre announced that she will not renew a second term to serve on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Lori Galbreath announced that she will renew a second term to serve on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

David Hoggard commended Lynne Leonard for her communication efforts regarding events at the Farmer's Market. Hoggard stated that with budget reductions the form of communicating and announcing events through email is an inexpensive and extremely effective way to communicate Parks and Recreation events.

With no further business, Hoggard adjourned the meeting at 7:08 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Richardson, Executive Assistant
Greensboro Parks and Recreation